



Maryland Green Registry MEMBER

The Maryland Green Registry promotes and recognizes sustainable practices at organizations of all types and sizes. Members agree to share at least five environmental practices and one measurable result while striving to continually improve their environmental performance.

Pearlstone



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www.pearlstonecenter.org
Farm, education, and retreat center
Member since February 2017

Management and Leadership

Environmental Policy Statement

Sustainability is at the core of Pearlstone's operation and community engagement program, as described on our [website](#). The Pearlstone Sustainability Policy was approved by the Pearlstone Board of Directors in May 2017. The overarching policy is summarized here:

"Pearlstone is committed to operating and promoting a sustainable organization – one that minimizes its impact on the environment, places value on and promotes human health and well-being, and operates as efficiently and economically as possible.

Through programs such as energy efficiency, water conservation, waste prevention, environmentally responsible procurement, and employee, visitor, and community education, Pearlstone will evaluate its current operations, strive to improve its sustainability performance, and implement more sustainable business practices."

Environmental Team

Pearlstone has a Green Wellness Team that meets monthly. The purpose of the team is threefold: (1) Activate the Sustainability Policy; (2) Raise awareness of sustainable practices; and (3) Facilitate education to help stimulate ideas and actions for system improvements. Team members' roles are to (1) Help align programs with the guiding principles of the Sustainability Policy; (2) Be an

ambassador for promoting sustainability within department; and (3) Identify achievements, opportunities, and struggles for communication back to the team. Currently, the Green Wellness Team is working on improving waste segregation and signage as well as a Power Down Campaign for computers.



Environmentally Preferable Products and Services

Environmental Education:

- *Pearlstone provides environmental educational opportunities for participants of all ages to learn about our connection to the earth through topics such as composting, vermiculture, pickling, natural dyeing, and using natural resources to create lip balm and salve.*
- *Pearlstone offers an environmental adventure camp which is a farm and forest experience; as well as a weeklong immersive experience for 5th and 6th graders on becoming guardians of the earth.*

Sustainable Food and Agriculture:

- *In 2107, Pearlstone's Farm was certified as a U.S.D.A. Organic Farm!*
- *Pearlstone has an Ethical Food Policy, and is committed to nourishing guests in body, mind, and soul. Pearlstone food honors the bounty of the seasons, the traditions of our ancestors, and the integrity of sustainable agriculture. Pearlstone provides 100% consciously sourced, wholesome, delicious food inspired by crops grown on our farm and prepared with love and care.*
- *During Covid-19, through our emergency food response efforts, as of February 2021, we have provided 50,000 meals to our community. We provide nourishing meals for food insecure communities across Baltimore, have activated our culinary staff and farmers, engaged community volunteers, and support a range of partner nonprofit organizations.*
- *Pearlstone embraces farming practices in line with traditional Jewish practices which includes the implementation of a shmita, or rest year, where the land is left fallow. Drip irrigation is used to conserve water. In 2018, Pearlstone planted a U-Pick strawberry field where community members can enjoy handpicking organic fruit. The Pearlstone farm grows food to supply the kitchen with ingredients for plant-based meals for guests.*
- *In 2019, and again in 2021, Pearlstone used a prescribed burn to manage 15 acres of meadow that were converted from mowed grass three years ago. By not mowing, we avoided 60 weekly mows using a 35 horsepower tractor. This prevented 180 gallons of diesel/year. This process also eliminated the need for managing invasive species with pesticides; and promotes an increase in plant, insect, bird, and mammal diversity; as well as an increase in biomass which leads to increased carbon sequestration.*

- *As part of our plant a tree campaign, we are 30% (150 trees) of the way toward our goal of planting 500 new trees on campus. As a typical hardwood tree can absorb as much as 48 pounds of carbon dioxide per year, this will equate to 7,200 pounds of carbon dioxide sequestered each year (for 150 trees).*

Environmentally Preferable Purchasing

Pearlstone developed criteria for product specification to use during remodeling and renovation of the conference center and lodge buildings.

In 2019, Pearlstone developed an Environmentally Preferred Purchasing Policy to guide the procurement of goods and services across the campus. Additionally, Pearlstone formalized its long term practice of responsible pest management by developing an Integrated Pest Management Policy.

Environmental Restoration or Community Environmental Projects

As part of Pearlstone's Community Sustainability program, the Center launched the Pearlstone Sustainability Coalition. Volunteer members of the Coalition include representatives from Baltimore region synagogues, institutions, non-profits, private sector, and individuals. The Pearlstone Center and the Sustainability Coalition it facilitates is committed to catalyzing change towards greater sustainability and environmental health in Baltimore's Jewish community. One of the [large-scale projects](#) is the aggregation of the electrical demand of The Associated agencies. Pearlstone is a proud partner for a large-scale solar array, which will be located on rooftops in an industrial area in Baltimore City, and will be built to offset its electricity consumption. When the farm becomes operational in late 2021, it is estimated that one-half of The Associated's electricity for all its buildings, including the Jewish Museum of Maryland and Pearlstone Center, among others, will be offset through this project.

In December 2020, during the global pandemic, Pearlstone partnered with The Baltimore Jewish Council, to host: Charting the Course for Environmental Change in Maryland and focused on environmental justice. Moderated by Delegate Dana Stein and featuring Dr. Sacoby Wilson, this event brought together 100 people (virtually) to plot a course for advocating during Maryland's legislative session.

Waste

Composting

Pearlstone reduces food waste per the EPA Food Recovery Pyramid. From our farm, in 2017 we donated 10% of our harvest which amounted to 5,000 pounds of organic produce to local food bank and food rescues; in the kitchen, we implemented portion control strategies; in the dining room and kitchen, we collected 3,000 pounds of food scraps which we compost on site with yard and farm debris. In 2017, we generated 6,000 pounds of biologically rich compost that we gifted back to the earth.

Energy

Energy Efficiency

Pearlstone has implemented energy conservation measures (ECMs) in the conference center and lodges to reduce usage and associated costs. Compared to the baseline year of 2015, Pearlstone realized a 28% decrease in site EUI at year end 2017! This corresponds to a 30% decrease in cost and a 27% decrease in total GHG emissions. The most significant ECM was the installation of a building automation system.

Renewable Energy

In 2021, we installed a 57 KW solar project that covers 10,000 square feet of rooftops at the Reisterstown, MD facility. The panels are forecasted to generate more than 75,000 KWhrs per year and will save about \$9,500 in electricity costs each year with an expected useful life of 25 years.

Pearlstone utilizes a solar water installation to provide hot water to the kitchen. It is saving Pearlstone about 30% each year in propane usage.

Transportation

Employee Commute/Customer Travel

Pearlstone received a BGE Green Grant to install two electric vehicle charging stations and they were installed in 2019.

Water



Water Conservation

- *Utilized throughout the Pearlstone farm is a drip irrigation system for watering plants efficiently without wasting water.*
- *Faucets throughout the building and lodge rooms have aerators which reduce the amount of water flowing from the faucet to conserve water.*
- *By switching to Ecolab's Smartpower system Pearlstone reduced 18,000 gallons of water/year; and saved 300 therms of energy/year. The chemical is 99.7% phosphate free and 100% phosphorous free. Packaging waste was reduced by 99.5% as compared to previously purchased products. We implemented Duraloc Floor tools that separate cleaning solution in a mop bucket from the soiled water from the mop after use, which reduced chemical usage by 60% and saves 5,000 gallons of water/year.*



Stormwater Management

In 2018, Pearlstone received a Stormwater Design Grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust to design a 0.9 acre wet meadow near our pond; 0.77 acre deep rooting pond buffer; 0.23 acre bioswale near our community farm; and 0.13 acre rain garden with native plant pallets. Additionally, we will redesign 2,082 linear feet of stream for a restored, more stable planform geometry. In 2020, we received implementation grant monies and expect implementation to be complete by the end of the 2021 calendar year.

Environmental Certification Programs, Awards, and Other Activities



In 2019, we become Fitwel certified and achieved the Sacred Grounds designation by the National Wildlife Federation.

Every year 2016 through 2020, Pearlstone received the [Hazon Seal of Sustainability](#). The Hazon Seal of Sustainability provides a roadmap to advance sustainability-related education, action, and advocacy in the Jewish community. In 2016, a pilot cohort of Jewish institutions across the country, including Pearlstone, received the Seal certification, and a 2017 cohort has joined the Hazon Seal.

With support from BGE's Green Grant program, Pearlstone designed and built a Sustainability Kiosk in our lobby. The Kiosk is an interactive, electronic station that explains and explores sustainability issues at Pearlstone and provides information on how users can be more sustainable at home. The custom-made wooden casing is created from reclaimed wood from a local barn.

In 2018, Pearlstone received a Maryland Green Registry Leadership Award.

In 2019, Pearlstone was named to the Maryland Green Registry Leadership Circle.

Profile Updated April 2021



Help build a greener, more sustainable Maryland through voluntary practices that reduce environmental impacts and save money.

Learn more at green.maryland.gov

